India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Viceroy's weekly telegram (September 11) to the Secretary of State announces a further reduction of the numbers of people in receipt of relief. The total is 4,334,000, a decrease of more than half a million on the preceding week's figure. The decrease is pretty fairly distributed, the largest proportional diminution —nearly one-half—occurring in the Punjab. The North-Western Provinces show double the number—2,000 for 1,000; and Madras has risen from 4,000 to 5,000. Rain has continued throughout the affected tracts, and the autumn crops promise well, "all present anxiety" regarding them in Madras, the Gangetic Plain, and Central Bengal being relieved. The outlook for the winter sowings is also reported good. The Governor of Bombay, however, wants more rain in parts of Bombay, the Deccan, and Khandesh. The deaths on relief works and gratuitous relief in British districts are given at 4,021, or 3·4 per thousand. Cholera has claimed 1,434 victims out of 2,000 cases in the famine-stricken districts, and in Native States 1,930 out of 2,970 cases. The distress is still heavy and widespread.

Sometimes champions of the Government of India defend high assessments in British territory by allegations of no less severe rates in Native States. Mr. Romesh Dutt, writing to the *Times* (September 11), points to the root of this fallacy. He says:—

> It is a fact known to all Indian administrators that Native States in India copy British rules and practice, even in minute details; and, when I plead for a moderate rental in British territory, not exceeding one-fifth of the gross produce, I plead the cause of the cultivators in Native States also. The British Government has sufficient influence with Native States to compel them to follow a good example set by itself.

Or, let us say, to reform a bad example set by itself—it may be, urged by its representatives. The action of Native rulers cannot be justly interpreted unless allowance is made for the influence of "the predominant partner."

Mr. Dutt takes the opportunity of again pressing for an enquiry into the operation of the land assessment in the districts where the most disastrous famines of the present generation have raged. Of course, for such an enquiry the Commission should be mixed—partly British, partly Indian. Mr. Dutt suggests Sir Antony MacDonnell as president. For the rest, he says:—

> Mr. Fraser, the able and sympathetic Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, can best represent those provinces; Madras and Bombay may each be represented by a distinguished European revenue officer; and two or three Indian gentlemen familiar with revenue administration may be added to form the Commission. The finding of such a Commission on the most serious and momentous Indian question of the day will be accepted as final by all parties.

Mr. Dutt has already offered to the Viceroy to serve on such a Commission, and certainly no Indian official or ex-official has a better claim, whether on personal or official grounds of competence. The need for a Commission is obvious and urgent.

A missionary report, by the Rev. Dr. A. H. Browne, upon the sufferings of the people in the Bhil country in Northern Gujerat, rivals in painful description the worst accounts of the famine that have hitherto reached us. Dr. Browne wrote on August 6:—

> For the past fortnight we have been receiving precious rain, and already the face of the country is beginning to look different, but the advent of the rains has nearly quadrupled our death-rate. This is hardly to be wondered at when one sees the condition of the people. A very large number is composed of living skeletons of women, girls, and boys, and, comparatively speaking, a few men . . . . gaunt figures just composed of bones covered with loose skin. From their hips to their feet there is no change in thickness—just long, straight bones clothed with skin. The abdomen in many cases can be encircled by two hands.

The wretched people have scarcely a rag upon them—nothing that can be called clothing:—

> At night time the poor creatures have to lie on the bare ground; those women who have remnants of saris or chaddars carefully spread them out on the ground and lie on top, thus having something between the damp cold earth and their skins! But there is no covering for the body. Really, in practical language, one may say that the majority, day time and night time, are almost in a state of nudity.

"Is it to be wondered at," asks Dr. Browne, "that many die during the night, and that, if there has been any rain, the number of deaths is greater?" Small cause for wonder, surely.

Dr. Browne tells how he went the rounds at night "to see that all was right, and to try and find if any corpses were lying about, so as to have them protected from dogs and other animals till the body-burners came on duty at daylight":—

> I met with the body of one woman; beside her were three or four children. Yesterday morning I went out soon after six a.m., prowling about; seven bodies were found lying in one place or another, and four came from the hospital; up to two p.m. six more corpses were picked up, and a few more came from the hospital. . . . . And so it goes on day by day—death, disease, and famine-stricken all around one. We are losing by death from about eighteen to twenty-five daily.

And "the same story of death and misery meets one on visits from one station to another. Skulls, skeletons, recently dead bodies (generally partly eaten by dogs and jackals), and a little older corpses have been met with in all the journeys I have taken." Why, "one soon tires of counting skulls without skeletons and skeletons without skulls." The Bhils, we know, are very intractable, but surely sympathetic and sensible officials might have done something to obviate such a frightful tale of calamity.

The *Friend of India*, commenting on Dr. Browne's Report, goes on to speak of the Northern section of the Mission (C.M.S.), which is in Udaipur, in Rajputana. This section is "fairly well supplied with grain and other necessaries." But,

> great difficulty has been experienced owing to the fact that the people are reduced to such desperate straits that they attack any food convoys that are unaccompanied by an armed escort, so that it has been impossible to convey grain without the aid of Sepoys along the sixty miles of road from the railway terminus at Udaipur to the Mission station at Kherwara.

In the Southern section of the Mission, whose field is the territories of the Mahárájá of Idar and the Rao of Vyengar, "the state of things is much worse." For there

> The missionaries have been short of funds, and have had great difficulty in procuring the bare necessaries of life to save the people from starving. Since the rains broke, however, matters have somewhat improved, and 6,400 people are now in receipt of daily meals; but more help is urgently required, the area with which the missionaries are dealing being only a part of a much larger tract similarly affected.

The Native rulers of the two States concerned are apparently not able to give much assistance. It is painful to be unable to send help to the devoted men and women who are labouring to lighten the calamity. "Meantime," adds the *Friend of India*, "the Rev. Mr. Thomson has died at his post, of cholera." Some of our countrymen give their energies and their lives; yet England seems to

be too poor in pocket, or in spirit, to lend an effective hand!

The *Simla News* (August 23) protests strongly against the impolicy of the Punjab Land Alienation Bill, "an impolicy which," it says, "is fraught with danger to the Government of the country." It admits that in certain parts of the province agricultural distress does exist, but urges that the Bill "is too far-reaching and too general in its territorial scope and application." "A surgeon does not amputate the whole arm if a mere whitlow exists on the little finger." The Bill, indeed, "is a mischievous piece of legislation," "an outrage of the soundest and well-recognised canons of political economy," and its enactment "will only exacerbate the evils its promoters hope to remedy." Reasons are these:—

We are amongst those who believe that, if the present sources and agency to which the *zemindar* or rayat can appeal when in want of pecuniary assistance, are removed, the last state of these people will be worse than their present. Their property will be lessened in value, and they will have no one to appeal to and no where to resort to for their often much needed financial assistance. No sane money-lender will advance money upon the terms created by and imposed in the proposed Act. Then again, supposing an usufructuary mortgage is sanctioned under the new Act in consideration of the advance the *bunniah* makes, say on the security of the large portion of an agriculturist's holding, what will be left for him to live upon? Moreover, as pointed out by the Hon. Sir Harnam Singh Ahluwalia, K.C.I.E., in his minute of dissent, the temporary mortgages, permissible under the Revenue officer's sanction, will become or take the form in fact of perpetual mortgages.

Our contemporary believes that "the provisions of Sections 320 to 327 of the Code of Civil Procedure are wide enough to prevent undue alienations of agricultural or revenue-paying land"—wide enough, that is, to meet the main purpose of the Bill. It points out, however, that "the reason of the Bill is not far to seek." Thus:—

The reason for the Bill is, we believe, to be found in the inordinate greed of power that exists in the mind and hearts of those belonging to the executive branch, and the jealousy which exists between it and the judicial branch of the Administration. This has been so ever since the semi-separation of the executive from the judicial branch, which took place in 1884, when the Deputy Commissioner ceased to have jurisdiction as a principal court of original jurisdiction in a district, and to exercise control in matters of civil justice over the judicial staff of the district. There has always been a feeling amongst the older executive officers that they have lost a certain amount of *prestige* by ceasing to exercise such civil powers and such administrative control, and consequently every opportunity is taken to oust the jurisdiction of civil courts.

The Bill has been conceived, not so much for the protection and relief of the needy agriculturist, but rather for the suppression of the well-to-do *bunniah*, who "will not always accept without question the arbitrary *hukms* of the rural aristocrat whose motto is *sic volo, sic jubeo*." The *Simla News* embarks on much more insecure waters when it alleges that "the real causes of agricultural distress are improvidence, extravagance, early marriages, and the joint family system."

In the article on the storage of water in our last week's issue we said that "the stores of underground water may be taken to be inexhaustible at every point." At the same time it is well to recall the opinion of Mr. Santo Crimp (INDIA, vol. xiii, p. 73, February 16), who finds that the geological formations of Western India conform to neither of the conditions essential to the success of artesian wells, namely, (1) a large catchment area of porous rocks, such as chalk, to absorb a portion of the rainfall, and (2) that this porous formation should extend underneath a plain, in part clay, so that the water may be confined to the porous stratum. This adverse opinion is, at any rate, a distinct warning against embarking in large operations in quest of subterranean water. But it can hardly, without considerable corroboration from experiment, be taken as barring reasonably simple attempts to find water not far from the surface.

The *Madras Standard* discusses the question of irrigation, with plenty of materials lying ready to its hand. It recalls the fact that the usual grant of seventy-five lakhs has been raised for the current year to a crore, and that Mr. Clinton Dawkins said in his financial statement that, in view of the immense value of irrigation in times of scarcity, "the Government of India are resolved to spare no efforts to make ample provision for irrigation." But our contemporary, while "glad to note that more attention is still paid in England to the question of the advisability of extending irrigation works in India," enters a *caveat* on two points. In the first place:—

What about small works? We know Government have a partiality for large and *remunerative* works. But, unless we are much mistaken, it is the small works that are now urgently needed and are unfortunately greatly neglected.

And in the second place:—

We must say that if the extension of irrigation works is to be accompanied by an abnormal increase of the burdens of the rayat, no good will come out of it. Irrigation Cess Acts, such as the one recently passed into law by the Madras Government, cannot enable the Government to achieve the object they have in view. . . . Irrigation works should not be used as a means of squeezing the rayats.

Both points appear to be very sound doctrine. Yet where is the money to come from if not mainly from the rayats? Perhaps the *Madras Standard* will unfold a plan when it comes to deal with "the financial and economic aspects of the policy."

In our "Notes from Bombay" last week, some stress was laid on the duty of agitating for "the arrears, adjusted arrears, admitted and acknowledged, of £2,400,000 due to India, overdrawn by the British Treasury in connexion with certain military and other charges." "Why," asked the writer, "is the British Treasury shirking that large liability?" It will be well to refer to Lord Northbrook's speech (July 20), in which this point was raised. Lord Northbrook said:—

For his part he was quite ready to accept arbitration, with the reservation that India should receive proper consideration for the great delay in the settlement of her claims. The Treasury had Lord Lansdowne's report before them in 1890, and the question might have been settled in 1893. Now it could not be settled before 1901. In his opinion India was entitled to consideration in that respect, and he did not think it was too much to ask that eight years' arrears of this £300,000 should be given to India. It was a mere trifle. Those eight years of arrears amounted to £2,400,000.

The £2,400,000 thus appears to be Lord Northbrook's calculation of equitable arrears on the basis of the date when the question might have been settled but for the delay of the British Government. For our own part, we do not see why the calculation should not go farther back, for the whole period of the overcharge. But Lord Onslow did not accept Lord Northbrook's specific proposal, but agreed to give "at least £250,000 and probably more towards the relief of the revenues of India." "Her Majesty's Government," he added, "desire to treat India, not only equitably, but liberally; and if time were given them they hoped to give effect to other recommendations of the Royal Commission."

Lord Salisbury, too, thought "it was very desirable that the treatment of India should be generous and liberal," though he went on to develop a course of argument that would apparently leave little room for generosity and liberality. But it is not important now that we should attempt to find out the exact significance of his remarks. It is more germane to our purpose to point out that the capitation question still remains open, and to refer to Mr. Buchanan's recent remarks on that not inconsiderable matter. Further, it is to be remembered that Lord Northbrook quoted from Lord Lansdowne's despatch of March 25, 1890—a despatch signed also by Lord Roberts:—

Millions of money have been spent on increasing the army of India, on armaments and fortifications, to provide for the security of India, not against domestic enemies or to prevent the incursions of the warlike people of adjoining countries, but to maintain the supremacy of British power in the East. The scope of these great and costly measures reaches far beyond Indian limits, and the policy which dictates them is an Imperial policy. We claim, therefore, that in the maintenance of the British forces in this country a just and even liberal view should be taken of the charges which should legitimately be made against Indian revenues.

This claim for "millions of money" is not to be forgone; and Lord Northbrook spoke of the £293,000 as "an immediate and substantial relief," not as a final and complete settlement. Our correspondent may reassure himself that the friends of India have no mind to be satisfied with the scrappy quarter of a million, nor even with £2,400,000.

Many a time has the question been asked: How is the industrial decline in India to be stopped? How is the decline in Indian handicrafts to be arrested? It does seem strange that Mr. John Wallace, C.E., in a recent lecture on "Technical Education in India," at the J. N. Petit Institute, Bombay, should have been in a position to make publicly such a statement as this:—

The young engineers that come out of our colleges are not crafts-

men; they have very often a hazy notion of the direction in which a screw turns; they cannot close a rivet or direct the operations of a smith or a carpenter, or give a practical opinion regarding the qualities of iron or timber.

With all allowances for rhetorical exaggeration it does seem ridiculous that the principles of physical science should be so hopelessly divorced from practical experience. Further, "they have not been taught to teach, and, had they been taught, their knowledge is not of the kind that would improve the Indian workman." The only thing to say seems to be this: that, anyhow, such students should not be long in taking on practical knowledge if they really have got a grip of principles; and that provision still remains to be made for the needs of the Indian workmen.

Mr. Wallace puts forward another method, "less imposing than the first, which will deal directly with the working class by instructing them through the agency of properly qualified teachers"—a method, strange to learn, that "has not yet been tried in India," though it has been followed "in all countries which have achieved industrial eminence." It is the rather simple and obvious plan of getting a trained teacher to put the boys, or young men, through the appropriate exercises, with the necessary explanations. The instruction "must appeal to the pupil's immediate sense of gain"; it "must be essentially practical"; it "must be directed to the wants of to-day in India, and must neither be influenced by the way in which things are done elsewhere or by what is likely to be done twenty years hence;" and it "must be framed on a non-literate basis." It is something to know that "the chief reason for the failure of industrial schools to do what might have been reasonably expected of them" is, in Mr. Wallace's opinion, the lack of teaching capacity in the "good workmen" that have been set to do the teaching. Mr. Wallace thinks that "the work of industrial re-organisation is of such magnitude that none but the Government could undertake it with any hope of success." We should hope that municipalities and public-spirited citizens will not wait for the lead of a Government that has no money to spare for such a fundamentally important public purpose. The thing can be done in detail, and on a humble scale, wherever there is a clear-headed citizen to set it going.

A letter, appropriately signed "A False Guide," appears in the *Madras Mail*, controverting the statement that Sir William Lee-Warner's "Citizen of India" had been adopted as a text-book, and quoting Mr. Bilderbeck in support of this denial. But the effect of the quotation is just the reverse. Mr. Bilderbeck said, regarding the proposed examination in the duties of a citizen:—

There was only one thing left for him to say, and that was, as there was no satisfactory text-book known to the individual members of the Syndicate or members of the Board of Studies in History, it was thought advisable that the examination should not go outside certain subjects dealt with in Sir W. Lee-Warner's "Citizen of India."

Here, then, we see that the "Citizen of India" is the only book mentioned, and its scope sets the limit to the scope of the examination. Is not this practically to make it a text-book, at all events till a more satisfactory one is discovered and announced? How unsatisfactory Sir William Lee-Warner's book is, readers of India already know.

It is always pleasant to record anything to the advantage of the Indian police. The Central Provinces Police Report for 1899 awards high praise to the conduct of the police and their relations with the people. This is very specially to the credit of the force in a year of terrible famine. The Deputy Commissioner of Saugor, for example, actually expresses "indebtedness to the police for their assistance and co-operation in all matters connected with the alleviation of distress." We read again of their "keen sympathy," and of their "almost phenomenally kindly" relations with the people. No wonder the Chief Commissioner regards this as a satisfactory feature in the year's work. It may be, in part at least, as the *Pioneer* thinks, "one of the advantages of local recruitment." But we should expect to find, on investigation, that not a little of the good result is to be attributed to the officers in command; and we should not be surprised if it reflects the temper of mind of the Chief Commissioner himself, who has distinguished his term of office in so conspicuous a manner during the terrible trials of the famine.

The *Power and Guardian* justly remarks that "the imposition of a punitive police on a large city like Cawnpore by the Government of the North-West Provinces does not seem consistent with the essence of the resolution of the Government on the riots." It seems no more consistent with the letter and the spirit of the recent Plague Resolution of the Government of India. Nobody of sense has any sort of sympathy with riot and disorder, but, after all, when peace is restored, liberal consideration ought to be allowed for the avoidable causes of the outbreak. "The Government," as our contemporary says, "indirectly acknowledged mistakes and blunders on the part of their subordinate officers;" and it is scarcely equitable that such mistakes and blunders should be visited upon the general population of the town where they aided at least in stirring up a temporary demonstration of violence against law. "The plague riots in India are certainly quite different in their essence from ordinary riots;" and where they are directly traceable to "the blundering policy of the authorities" or to lack of judgment on the part of subordinates, the punishment ought to be tempered accordingly. In any case it is always abhorrent to the popular sense of justice to punish innocent and guilty alike.

Without venturing to interfere between the Mahárájá of Darbhanga and the editor of the *Madras Standard*, who flagellates him in his capacity of President of the Hindu Religious Congress at Delhi, one may yet point out that both parties may work for good on different lines that must necessarily converge. The object of the movement, the Mahárájá explained, is threefold: to promote the Hindu religion as laid down in the Vedas and Puranas, to ensure the continuance of the Hindu customs and observances, and to encourage the study of Sanskrit. The organisation has some 700 branches, with institutions maintained in the principal towns of Northern India. Still, the *Madras Standard* thinks the Mahárájá "is leading a forlorn hope," for

no Mahamandals can arrest the growth of new ideas in Hindu society, and, in spite of its resolutions, when the heterogeneous mixture known as Hinduism is melted in the fierce heat of modern intellectual criticism, the dross will be separated from the metal; people will change their beliefs and practices, and the heterodoxy of to-day will be the orthodoxy of to-morrow.

Well, that may be so. But, even assuming as much, the melting process will only be expedited by the active operations of the Congress organisation. Mr. Justice Ranade has already told us how much has to be done for the true interpretation of Hindu beliefs, and all the Mahárájá may do in the direction of getting at the facts will stand to the good in any future reconstruction under the "fierce heat of modern intellectual criticism." Truth has the best chance of emerging from active intellectuality in whatever form.

The bad blood that has arisen over the appointment of Mr. Copleston to the chief seat in the new court at Rangoon has caused the *Friend of India* to turn its eyes to Westminster as "the best field for fighting wrongs that find no redress" in India. Our contemporary says:—

Given at Westminster even a dozen just men, with a good fighting strain in them and a single-hearted desire to champion India, for the sake of right, and not for the sake of getting on, and appointments such as have lately been made to high judicial office in this country would become impossible. If this ideal be unattainable, combination of the non-official interests in England would probably be the best means of securing a hearing in India. If the different Chambers of Commerce would join and head a movement for the establishment of a Central Committee in London which would affiliate itself to, and support with money and information, a strong and compact India party in the House of Commons, the cost per head would not be very much, and we should never again, probably, witness such a gratuitous interference with Indian industry as, let us say, the Mines Bill.

We say nothing about the Rangoon appointment or the Mines Bill, but we know something of the difficulties of fighting Indian interests at Westminster. Here, in the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, is an organisation perfectly capable of doing all that can be done—an organisation that has inspired and—not to put too fine a point upon it—has actually engineered all that has been done; and that all, when it is added up, amounts to not a little. However, we are always glad to see other earnest men trying for the like objects with ourselves, and we shall heartily welcome the co-operation of "a dozen just men" of the further qualifications specified, or of any "Central Committee in London" for the objects indicated.

TO SAVE THE RAYAT:
REMISSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS.

In view of the fearful calamity involved in the famine, it is very painful to be under the necessity of pressing upon the authorities the most obvious necessity of dealing in a temper of large liberality with the unfortunate rayats. In the North-Western and in the Central Provinces the need for remonstrance has been practically obviated by the intelligent and masterful administrators who rule these regions. But in Bombay, where the land revenue presses most heavily, exacting from 20 to 33 per cent. of the gross produce, neither the history of the past nor the plain teaching of the present has yet been laid to heart by the controlling officials. These do not seem to have any recollection of mischief wrought by over-taxation in the early decades of the century, nor of the official recognition of its fatal consequences in the early forties. Nor do they seem even to go back in memory to the blight that fell on the Presidency in consequence of the enormous increase of assessments on the first settlement after the government was transferred to the Crown—an increase made under stress of an empty exchequer and in blind forgetfulness of the disastrous past and of the newness of the agricultural prosperity of the country. In the early seventies the collectors were again, of course, reporting the utmost difficulty in recovering the Government demand, and in 1874 the evil culminated in the Deccan riots, when it was found on investigation—what was sufficiently obvious on the very face of the facts—that the pressure of the land tax at the revised rates was a prominent cause of the disturbances. Then came the drought of 1876-77, and the strain has been steadily maintained, and indeed steadily increased ever since. In order to increase the land revenue the Government has harried the agriculturists to the utmost point of safety; and the natural result has been that, while the country has been despoiled, the policy has proved a ghastly failure. We have incomparable legislators and administrators for whom history has no lesson whatever.

But surely it might be supposed that the present calamity, following on the heel of another calamity—both calamities of unprecedented magnitude, and both speaking loudly and ominously of the future in store for the Presidency—would have impressed the understanding even of Bombay officialdom. The official words are fair, to be sure; but it is the official action that sensible men are concerned with. Replying to the recent memorial of the Bombay Presidency Association, the Government of Bombay admit that "it is scarcely possible to over-estimate the magnitude of the calamity that has befallen the greater part of the Presidency," and that "the people who are suffering are entitled to the utmost sympathy and consideration." Well, how is this sympathy and consideration to be manifested? "It is the earnest wish of the Government to avoid any addition to the difficulties of struggling cultivators by exacting from them the land revenue assessment, to pay which they have not the means in hand." Very good; then don't exact it. But the Government draw a distinction—a very proper distinction in the abstract—between those that can pay and those that cannot. They are mightily surprised and indignant that the Association should have stated that "well-founded complaints are being made in the Native newspapers that the collection of the arrears of revenue are even now"—that is, even amid the horrors of famine, plague, cholera, and all the complicated miseries of the time—"being carried on in certain afflicted tracts with nearly the same cast-iron rigidity which is so much deplored by all well-wishers of the rayat in normal seasons." Their answer is this:—

> It has been distinctly ordered that no coercion should be used to recover from the occupant assessment which he cannot pay out of resources other than those needed for the efficient resumption of agricultural operations, and that the benefit of any reasonable doubt is to be given to the occupant. It has further been directed that no warrant of distraint is to be issued in the current year by an officer of lower rank than an Assistant or Deputy Collector, and it is open to any person who is presumed to have resources other than those needed for the efficient resumption of agricultural operations—that is, one who is by common repute well-to-do—to show that he has not such resources. . . . . The Governor in Council has no reason to believe that any pressure has been used where the assessment was not contumaciously withheld, and the results so far corroborate that view.

Now, this is all beautiful enough on paper. But one wants to get at the facts. In the first place, the Government no doubt have "ordered" that coercion should not be used except with discrimination. But the point is whether or not this order has been obeyed. In the second place, the Government no doubt has "directed" that no warrant shall be issued except under the hand of reasonably good authority. But, again, the point is whether or not this direction has been obeyed. It was indeed a pity that the Association did not fortify its statement with specific cases, even if it had been necessary to guarantee the complainants and their witnesses against molestation. At the same time it is but too common knowledge, outside the highest circles of authority, how loosely Government "orders" and "directions" are interpreted by some minor officials, and how likely it is that the Government are just the last to hear of any departures from their prescriptions. We know that the discrimination required is practically inoperative, the payment of revenue under coercion being in no sense a guarantee of capacity to pay it; and only last week we related a case of distraint without any warrant at all—one of a series of "illegal and oppressive practices" that, according to the magistrate, "have prevailed for years together in this part" (Broach district). And where is the use of the Government's pluming themselves on the absence of complaints, when everybody, like the magistrate of Unkaleshwar in Broach, is "painfully impressed with the manner in which the poor rayats have silently allowed these illegal and oppressive practices to continue so long without daring to even complain about them." Yes, the poor wretches do not dare even to complain. What does that say for the Government and for the official methods?

The Government, however, while raking in with one hand, are giving out *taccavi* with the other hand. "Already," they state, "about seventy-six lakhs have been allotted to make advances for such purposes, and recovery within a limit of one-half of the total amount of such advances will be forgone when it cannot be made without hardship." But the point of "hardship" again multiplies the whole matter; of course, the officials will recover it "without hardship." Anyhow, it will be something to keep the rayats going in the meantime. And what about suspensions and remissions, which are so abhorrent to the Bombay Government? As to suspensions, the Bombay Presidency Association recalled the practice of the Government in their memorial, thus:—

> The suspensions of one year become the collections and the added burdens of the next. Administration Reports tell us but too plainly how speedily the suspended revenue of a famine year is generally collected. To take the two years which followed that of the last famine. The collections on account of arrears are recorded as follows:—
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | Collected in 1897-98 | .. .. | Rs. 5,11,386 |
> | ,, 1898-99 | .. .. | 10,90,445 |
>
> while the balances which remained to be collected since 1898-99 are recorded as under:—
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | Balance for 1897-98 | .. .. | Rs. 3,10,875 |
> | ,, 1898-99 | .. .. | 2,82,860 |
>
> In all sixteen lakhs of rupees of arrears have been collected, and six are yet to be collected; or say in all nearly twenty-two lakhs from the three divisions of the Bombay Presidency, exclusive of Sindh.

"These figures," the Association naturally added, "tell their own eloquent tale as to the way in which suspensions weigh upon the rayat, and it is beyond question that it would be impossible to repeat the process on this occasion without crushing and ruinous effect." Even the *Times of India* has told the Government the same thing. One would be interested to trace the effect of the collection of those twenty-two lakhs of arrears upon the condition of the payers during the present famine. Remissions? Bombay does not remit. Stay; it is well to be careful not to do Bombay injustice in this profoundly serious matter. In the famine of 1896-97, out of a total demand of 173 lakhs on account of the affected districts, Bombay did remit—Rs.15,161!

The *Times of India*, to its great credit, has spoken out manfully on this urgent and terrible question. Its contention was cited in the memorial of the Bombay Presidency Association. Thus (May 30):—

> The situation can be met only by large and generous remissions, applied not to individual holdings or to small groups of holdings, but to large areas in which uniform conditions prevail. We shall have for the time being to abandon the principle of the Bombay system which assumes that everyone can pay his assessment unless he gives proof to the contrary.

And since the end of May the *Times of India* has driven home its arguments in a series of most able articles that could not fail to impress any official body possessed of either an intellect or a soul. Like the Association, it

points to the example of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and of the Central Provinces. In the former region the arrears on account of the famine of 1896-97 amounted to 147 lakhs. The Government acknowledged that the amount could not possibly be collected, and accordingly "decided to remit the famine arrears to the extent of 60 lakhs of rupees, and to spread the recovery of the balance over two years, so as to ease the pressure on the revenue-payers and give them time for recovery." In the Central Provinces, out of a total demand of 92¼ lakhs, Rs. 4,40,253 were wholly remitted, while Rs. 26,52,382 were suspended, and a very considerable proportion of this large suspension was eventually converted into remissions, to say nothing of the liberal advances made by way of *taccavi*. How does Bombay look in the light of the action of these sister provinces? We know that the sanction of the Government of India is necessary, but it does not appear that the Bombay Government has ever troubled the Government of India on the subject. It must, therefore, bear on its own head the ignominy of a course of action that constitutes both a blunder and a crime. By keeping the rayat's head under water it is drowning itself with its victim.

The first thing is to keep the rayat in life and enable him to go on with his work again. That may be done by liberal *taccavi*. But that is not enough; the anxiety of the man about meeting the Government demand must be lifted off his mind. "The mere suspension of revenue," however, as the Bombay Presidency Association says, "will not satisfy present requirements"; for it still leaves the weight of the Government demand hanging over him, while he is totally hopeless of satisfying it. Reluctant as the Government may be to tread the unaccustomed path of remission, there is no other statesmanlike course open to them now; and, paradox as it may appear, their eventual harvest will be in proportion to their liberality. There will, of course, be the spendthrift's intolerable difficulty of making financial ends meet. But this difficulty is the one to be got over, whether by loan or by reductions of ordinary expenditure, or by a slice of the coming national grant from the British exchequer. For the rayat cannot on any terms be allowed to go under—the rayat, who bears on his shoulders the British Indian Empire.

REVENUE CASES IN INDIAN LAW COURTS.

By N. Gupta.
(*Editor of the* Prabhat, *Calcutta*.)

REVENUE cases, properly so-called, where the dispute is between the Government as landlord and the rayat as tenant, are not permitted in India to be submitted to the law courts for proper adjudication. The revision and enhancement of rent rest with officers appointed by Government; the taxpayer cannot test the fairness of the rent imposed in a civil court. His only chance of redress —a very remote one, by the way—is to appeal to the Revenue officers, from the Revenue Collector to the Revenue Commissioner, and again to the Board of Revenue or the Financial Commissioner (the designation varying in different provinces). But the whole thing is a mere formality, and the wretched rayat goes from pillar to post and back again from post to pillar and appeals in vain. In nine cases out of ten the Collector, Commissioner, and Board of Revenue are unanimous in rejecting appeals for the reduction of rents payable to Government, the largest landlord in the world.

When, however, there is a dispute between a private landlord and his tenant, the portals of justice are wide open to landlord and tenant alike. In point of fact, so great is the sympathy of the Government for the rayat who pays rent to a private landlord that they would fain do away with the Permanent Settlement, which, as Mr. Wilson of the *Investors' Review* has pointed out, is the cause of the everlasting lamentation of the Bengal officials. It was mainly in the interest of the rayat that the cadastral survey and record of rights were undertaken in Behar, part of Bengal and Orissa, in partial stultification of the conditions guaranteed by the Permanent Settlement. The persistent and strenuous, though unavailing, efforts of the late Mahárájá of Darbhanga, in this country as well as in England, to prevent the Government from doing an apparent injustice to the zemindars will be in the recollection of the readers of India. But, of course, there was no gainsaying the will of the Government, and the survey was carried out and the record prepared in accordance with the orders of Government. I desire in this article to draw attention to a typical instance of hardship and injustice on a number of rayats in Orissa. The case has been finally disposed of in the Calcutta High Court.

The Government of Bengal has extended the operation of Chapter X. of the Bengal Tenancy Act to several districts in Bengal and Orissa, and surveys have been made and records of rights prepared. The record of rights of village Markandpur in the Puri District in Orissa Division was finally published on November 28, 1898. This village is the rent-free endowment property of Sri Jagannath Deb, and one Bhagwan Ramani Das, Mohaut of Math Dakshin Paras Balisahi, is the *marfatdar* of this endowed village. On April 27, 1899, or about four months after the final publication of the record of rights, this man presented a number of petitions, about eighty-seven in all, under Section 105 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, to the Assistant Settlement Officer, alleging that the rents fixed in money and entered in the record of rights and payable by the tenants had not been properly recorded, and that the entries should be corrected by substituting the amounts of rents partly in kind and partly in money. The effect of these alterations would be an increase in the rents payable to the Mohaut. This circumstance alone made the petitions suspicious, but the Assistant Settlement Officer admitted and registered them as separate cases and passed an order summoning about 150 tenant-defendants before him on May 5 following. The defendants received no notice or summons, but on the date fixed—that is, May 5—a petition was filed by some person not known before the Assistant Settlement Officer, purporting to bear the marks or signatures of fifty-four tenants, admitting the plaintiff's claim. The Assistant Settlement Officer, without any inquiry as to the genuineness of the petition filed or the signatures, and without satisfying himself that the rents demanded by the plaintiff were fair and equitable, passed an order for correcting the entries as prayed for by the plaintiff.

On May 14 the defendants applied to the Settlement Officer to revise the proceedings of his subordinate on the ground that the proceedings instituted before the Assistant Settlement Officer were illegal, fraudulent, and void for want of jurisdiction, and that they had not authorised any one to put in a petition on their behalf admitting the claim of the Mohaut, the plaintiff. On May 17 the Settlement Officer, after hearing both sides, set aside the order of the Settlement Officer and rejected the petitions of the plaintiff on the ground that they had been filed out of time and that the Assistant Settlement Officer had no jurisdiction to entertain applications presented two months after the final publication of the record of rights.

Thereupon the Mohaut preferred an appeal before the Special Judge of Cuttack, who, without going into the merits, or the allegations of the tenants, held that the Settlement Officer had no power under the Act to reverse the order of the Assistant Settlement Officer, and that the original order must therefore stand. The learned Judge also suggested that the plaintiff had presented a petition in January, and although it was not on the record, the petitions of April 27 might be treated as a continuation. No allegation of this kind was made before the Assistant Settlement Officer. The suggestion was first made to the Settlement Officer, but no evidence whatever was forthcoming to show that any such petition had ever been presented by the plaintiff in January.

Finally, the matter came up before the Calcutta High Court, the tenants appealing against the judgment of the Special Judge. A Division Bench of the High Court (Rampini and Pratt, Jj.) summarily rejected the appeal. Another petition, supported by an affidavit, was presented to the High Court for setting aside the order of the Special Judge. In this affidavit all the facts and circumstances of the case were clearly and categorically stated. It was distinctly said that the petition presented before the Assistant Settlement Officer and containing the signatures and marks of a number of tenants was a fraud and forgery, as several persons whose names or signatures appeared on the petition had actually died some time before the presentation of the petition! In despite, however, of this and other serious allegations the learned judges summarily

rejected this second appeal, without assigning any reasons or going into the merits of the case. And there the matter rests.

Now, the cadastral survey and record of rights were undertaken almost solely to safeguard the tenants against the illegitimate or increasing demands of the zemindars. Here is an instance the other way, and owing to the disinclination of our judges to interfere in revenue or rent cases a grave injustice has been allowed to stand unexamined and unredressed. If the record of rights be so lightly interfered with, to the advantage of the zemindar, what protection is afforded to the rayats against the excessive demands of the zemindars? Had the High Court felt so inclined it could have remanded the case for evidence concerning the genuineness or otherwise of the petition alleged to have borne names and signatures of dead persons. But the learned judges absolutely declined to interfere. With this precedent before them zemindars will find nothing easier than to get their rents enhanced after the first publication of the records of rights, thanks to a complacent local Settlement Officer and an immovable High Court. Where the Government happen to be the direct landlord the High Court, or any other open court of justice, *cannot* intervene on behalf of the rayat; where the landlord is a zemindar and increases his rents our courts *will not* interfere to protect the rayats.

ENGLISH AUDIENCES AND THE INDIAN FAMINE.

By Miss Alison Garland.

(Lecturer on behalf of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.)

The English people can think of but one thing at a time. When I say the people I mean those average persons, or as they are now called, the "men in the street," who form the large majority of the population. Last winter the war was the topic above all others that absorbed attention. When the Chinese crisis burst on the world, South African affairs took a secondary place in public interest. Now that the Legations at Pekin are rescued, once more attention is centred on the movements of De Wet. Between these two wars the famine in India has snatched at times a passing notice, at other times a real, heartfelt interest. India has been especially unfortunate in that her calamity has happened at a time when England was engaged in a struggle for supremacy in South Africa. Had the famine occurred twelve months earlier it would have been *par excellence* the theme of conversation wherever the English tongue was spoken. Another reason for the somewhat scanty measure of interest the famine has attracted has been the ignorance of the people concerning its magnitude. The Press is largely to blame for this. While every newspaper of note had its representative at the seat of war, only the *Manchester Guardian* sent out its special correspondent to the famine districts. The *Morning Leader* also was well to the front with special articles and leaders on the subject, but these two papers stood almost alone. Columns and columns in the other papers described the brilliant charges, the battles lost and won on the veldt, the conditions of the besieged garrisons at Ladysmith or Mafeking. The imagination of the public was excited, and their sympathies and alms were generously given to the soldiers' widows and orphans. Reuter's brief cablegrams conveyed but dim impressions of the agonies endured by the Indians. "There are 5,000,000 on relief works." How little the English people realised in that one brief line the struggles of the rayats to keep the home together in that far-off village; the farewell, probably for ever, to the old homestead; the weary journey over white dusty roads to the towns; the hardships endured on the way; the arrival in the famine camp; the indignities suffered by the sensitive caste-prejudiced people; the break-up of all home life; the monotony of stone-breaking under the burning Eastern sun; the coarse and unvaried diet—these things had to be explained before they were understood, and then, and not till then, were sympathies fully aroused.

The object of the meetings has been to tell these things, and to bring home to our people the agonies involved in a great famine like that prevailing in India. That the people were anxious for information was proved by the readiness with which they arranged the meetings and shared in the expenses of hiring halls and printing bills. As a rule, meetings are not usually held in the summer months in England. After Easter political work on the platform is dropped till October. Yet, notwithstanding the heat of this summer, the halls have been well filled, and the collections have varied from £10 at small meetings to £500 at large ones. Since my return from India I have addressed forty-four meetings on the famine and Indian questions generally.

One special feature of these meetings has been their non-party character. Wherever I could I arranged towns' meetings, the Mayor presiding, and the leading Conservative and Liberal men in the town, also clergymen and ministers of all denominations in religion, were well represented on the platform. It was an unique opportunity of instructing these people in the causes as well as the effects of famine in India. Some of them have never given deeper thought to the subject than to imagine that loss of rain is the sole cause of famine, and it was interesting to watch their faces as they heard of the economic condition of the Indian peasant—the land revenues in various Presidencies, the old custom, the success of irrigation in certain parts of India, and the many facts so intimately connected with the sufferings of the people in time of drought. It was amusing to hear some Conservative chairman echoing the speaker's ideas and warmly advocating reforms that his party would have scouted had they known they were formulated by Sir William Wedderburn. The consensus of opinion was that after this famine is ended public interest should not decline on Indian questions, but that our rule in India should be examined and an honest attempt made so to govern India that famines may be in the future as little heard of there as they are in the Western world.

The actual collections taken at these meetings formed but a small part of the money sent to the Lord Mayor's Fund as the outcome of the meetings. My object was to arouse the warm sympathies of the audiences, and to make them work for the cause when I had left the town. In manufacturing districts we usually got promises of collections at the mills. Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire were especially diligent in their efforts in this direction. Mill-girls apportioned the wards, and took not once but sometimes at intervals several collections from "the hands" employed in every mill in the town. The churches and chapels too were begged to give one Sunday when at the morning and evening services special collections might be made for the famine. From £40 to £50 were collected at some of the chapels. In the towns of Street and Glastonbury, one lady, Mrs. Clothier Thompson, a grand-daughter of the late John Bright, made a number of collection boxes of cardboard. On the outside were printed brief facts stating the area in India over which the famine is spread, the ninety-two millions of people living in that area, the numbers on relief works, the numbers dying daily in certain districts, and showing how every penny would suffice for one meal for some starving person in India. These boxes were placed on the counters in the shops and brought in a good harvest for the funds. In other cases we arranged entertainments and concerts, when the proceeds went to the famine. The question might be asked, "What was the result of all these efforts?" It is impossible to state the actual result in figures, for we thought it best that such funds should be added to the Mayor's list. But the amount collected throughout the country, it will be said, was after all less than half a million. True; but we must remember that the charity of the English people has never been more earnestly solicited than during the last ten months, and that the war has caused a general rise in prices, and in many trades has almost paralysed business. While I much deplore the smallness of the contributions as a whole, I must admit the sacrifices many people have made to send money to the Famine Fund.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

THE LEGACY OF FAMINE.

THE NEED OF ENQUIRY.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, August 24.

There has been a good break, which was wistfully looked forward to by agriculturists in this part of the country. The dreaded abnormal fall has not taken place, and there is no longer apprehension of the "green famine" which was so generally feared. Meanwhile cholera and other diseases are claiming an unprecedented number of victims. In the city

itself the mortality has mounted up to more than 300 a day. This is frightful. It is to be hoped that we may soon witness a material diminution in this appalling death-rate.

The famine-stricken are now slowly wending their way to their villages; over a hundred thousand have already left the relief camps, and I suppose the exodus now begun will continue to be brisk till there is no more trace left of the relief camps. So far so good. But what next? This is *the* question of the day. Will the Government of India consider that its duty is at an end, and no more think of the events of the past twelve months in connexion with the drought, or will it survey the situation and at once begin to take practical measures for preventing distress arising from future famines? Will it call to its aid some of those capable engineers who have successfully constructed irrigation works in Egypt, and who are now engaged in harnessing the Nile at Atbara? Will it direct such experienced men to make a careful irrigation survey of all insecure tracts? Will it ask them to examine the capacity of all water-bearing localities and map them out, with a view to starting well-works or constructing tanks, reservoirs and so forth, as the soil and condition of each surveyed locality may demand? Will it also consider larger schemes to harness the waters of the large rivers in various parts of India, and see how far we may become independent of our monsoon rainfall? None can deny the force of that practical observation of the late Sir Arthur Cotton that there is nothing to prevent the Government from utilising, by damming, the immense quantity of river water which annually runs into the sea. Nature is bountiful so far; only we are shortsighted, and fail to utilise that bounty which she showers on India so profusely. It is devoutly to be hoped that the Government this time will not relapse into its chronic condition of indifference, and go on its way forgetting precautions against famine, till another and perhaps severer one overtakes the land. There is some hope that with so capable and energetic a Viceroy as Lord Curzon has already proved himself to be, no relapse will be allowed or tolerated. The primary obligation of the Government is to see how far by means of irrigation of all sorts and degrees, according to varying soils, India can be made secure against droughts in future. The second obligation is to see how far relief camps might be done away with, and the distressed made to live and maintain themselves as near their homes as possible. In this connexion one suggestion of a practical character has been well threshed out in the columns of the *Statesman*, touching the storage of grain. It is the old system, but modified to meet present conditions.

Meanwhile let us see how the Bombay Government proposes to shape its course as far as the land revenue question is concerned. The *Times of India* in no uncertain voice has already suggested that the time has come for a new departure. The old traditional policy must be abandoned, and another, in every way conformable to present conditions, is necessary. Almost similar in effect is the interpellation which the Hon. Mr. Mehta is to put to the Government at the meeting of the Legislative Council to-day. He has asked for a Commission of Enquiry for the purpose. It is certain that the Government will never consent to such an enquiry. In all probability they will evade a reply by saying it is a question of Imperial policy. But whether it be Imperial or Provincial, public opinion is pronounced on the subject, and it would be statesmanlike on the part of the responsible authorities to take up this question. But along with it the larger and the *root* question, too, must be considered. The incessant drain of the national wealth to England must be dealt with. Who will grapple with it? The time is drawing nearer and nearer when it must be grappled, whether the authorities are willing or unwilling. It must necessarily force itself on their attention, and that, perhaps, in a way which will leave no escape. But far-sighted and courageous statesmanship seems to be at a discount. This is the greatest of India's misfortunes.

At last the Bombay Government has been compelled to enquire into the accuracy of the statements made by "Gujerati" some time since in the columns of the *Times of India* touching the coercive policy pursued by some of the revenue underlings in Surat taluka and elsewhere. The substance of the investigation is given in to-day's papers, the tenor of which is, of course, to prove that the statements of the correspondent are "false," and those made by the officials are true. The immaculates of the Revenue department are all superlatively white swans. It is only the black non-officials who indulge in "false" statements. Governments, whether Indian or European, are above falsity. They are the very personification of truth, as all the world will gladly testify. What more is to be said? But so infatuated is the Bombay Government in the belief of the correctitude of its own officials that it fails to perceive the scepticism with which its own contradictions are received by the public. The "we are always right" tone is already discounted, and the *Times of India*, with keen sagacity, at once tells the public how many important statements of "Gujerati" are left untouched, which is proof conclusive of its own scepticism in the matter. It cannot endorse *all* that the ponderous Resolution tries to instil in the public mind. Nobody will, though "Bombay Castle" may lay the flattering unction to its soul that it has vanquished the anonymous correspondent who dared to arouse the pious wrath of its chief secretary. Of course, there are some statements of a categorical character. As to these the *Times of India* is very frank. It calls upon the correspondent to give further contradiction or to bow his head and say he had misrepresented or exaggerated. Let us see how the battle ends. There is much of a family likeness in the contradiction which followed Mr. Nash's letter and that which is to be seen in the present Resolution of Government. Credibility of evidence cannot be all on the side of Government. The best way to test the accuracy of the statements on the one side and the other is to call into requisition an impartial judicial tribunal, a special Commission, which could sift facts to the bottom and tell us the very truth of the matter. Departmental enquiries can scarcely be relied upon. The Government which is an interested party must itself offer to be examined, and allow the severest searchlight of a Commission of Enquiry to penetrate the affair. Then alone can the public be satisfied. Till then, the public should suspend judgment. It is, however, a hopeful sign of the spirit ruling in the Secretariat at present, that after all the brave show of condemnation about anonymous correspondence, a vigorous attempt has been made to sift allegations publicly made. Our motto in public affairs is "More light."

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

4,334,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated September 11:—

"Famine. Rain beneficial to crops has continued throughout past week in affected tracts, and prospects of autumn crops continue good. In Madras, Gangetic Plain, and Central Bengal good rain has relieved all present anxiety as regards autumn crops, and promises well for winter sowings. Steady fall in relief numbers may be expected. Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,182,000; Punjab, 58,000; Central Provinces, 1,958,000; Berar, 178,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 62,000; Rajputana States, 144,000; Central India States, 77,000; Bombay Native States, 163,000; Baroda, 64,000; North-Western Provinces, 2,000; Punjab Native States, 22,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 38,000; Hyderabad, 357,000; Madras, 5,000; Bengal, 24,000. Total, 4,334,000."

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Governor of Bombay:—

"Following are figures for week ended September 1:—Famine-stricken districts, 2,000 cases of cholera, of which 1,434 were fatal. Native States—cases of cholera, 2,970; deaths from cholera, 1,930. Total number of deaths among numbers on relief works and gratuitous relief—British districts, 4,021, or 3 2-5 per mille. Rainfall has been light in most places. More rain is now wanted in parts of Bombay, Deccan, Khandesh. Number of famine relief recipients shows decrease."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers amounted on Wednesday night to £368,700.

MR. ROMESH DUTT ON OVER-ASSESSMENT.

The following letter appeared in the *Times* of Tuesday last (September 11):—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

Sir,—I have perused with sincere pleasure the able and thoughtful review of my book on "Famines in India" which appeared in the *Times* of September 5. Permit me, however, to say a word on one point in which the reviewer is, I think, incorrect in his facts.

The reviewer assumes that in the Native States "still prevail those old Hindu rates and systems which the British Government is said to have abandoned." I sincerely wish this was so; but it is not so. It was only in March last that I had occasion to discuss the matter with a large number of local landlords in a Native State in Western India, and I was pained to learn that a rental of something like a third of the gross produce of the land was demanded and realised by these landlords. "But you are Hindus," I told them. "Surely you recognise the authority of the laws of Manu, and Manu lays down a sixth of the gross produce as the *maximum* rental in times of peace." "Yes," was the prompt reply, "but we follow the practice in British territories, and all over the Bombay Presidency the Government revenue closely approximates to a third of the gross produce." It is a fact known to all Indian administrators that Native States in India copy British rules and practice, even in minute details; and when I plead for a moderate rental in British territory, not exceeding one-fifth of the gross produce, I plead the cause of the cultivators in Native States also. The British Government has sufficient influence with Native States to compel them to follow a good example set by itself.

The most disastrous famines—in loss of life—which the present generation has witnessed were not famines in Northern India, but the Madras famine of 1877, the famine in the Central Provinces in 1897, and the famine in Bombay in the present year. It is in these provinces that lands are highly assessed, and it is not unreasonable to ask for an enquiry as to whether the land assessment presses severely in these provinces on the cultivating population.

There are men in India eminently fit to make such an enquiry, to the satisfaction of all—Englishmen and Indians alike. No administrator of this generation has achieved a higher distinction by his ability, downright honesty, and practical sympathy for the people than Sir Antony MacDonnell, Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Provinces. Let him preside over the enquiry. Mr. Fraser, the able and sympathetic Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, can best represent those provinces; Madras and Bombay may each be represented by a distinguished European revenue officer; and two or three Indian gentlemen familiar with revenue administration may be added to form the commission. The finding of such a Commission on he most serious and momentous Indian question of the day will be accepted as final by all parties. If I am wrong in holding that the over-assessment of land in some places has added to the frequency and intensity of recent Indian famines, I will cheerfully and publicly confess my error. And if the Government finds that such over-assessment does impoverish the people and makes famines frequent and fatal, I am sure the Government will take immediate steps to remedy the evil.

Yours faithfully,

54, Parliament Street, S.W. ROMESH DUTT.

September 8.

THE PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT.

The *Investors' Review* (September 8) writes:—

If we are to have a general election next month we may be quite sure that no attention will be paid meantime to the *Times* and other papers in their tardy advocacy of a grant to India from the Imperial Exchequer. The main endeavour of political wire-pullers on the Government side will be to put all disagreeables out of sight until the contest has been fought and the victory won. India's necessities may be urgent and enormous, the failure of England to come to the aid of the want-stricken people may involve consequences injurious to the prosperity of India for generations; it matters not, the truth must not be told. Rather is it deemed expedient to present or to broadly hint at the reverse of the truth, to dwell on the excellence of the monsoon, the diminution of the numbers in the relief works—still more than 5,000,000—and the smallness of the death-rate in certain districts, so as to spread the impression that the worst is over. The worst is not over, unless it be a gain that millions of industrious peasants should have been starved to death, thereby causing a diminution in the numbers of the hungry. For many months to come the misery will be intense; for years, we are told, there can be no plenty again for the people if we do not come to their help, if England refuses to bestow some millions from her abundance to restore lost cattle, to put an end to the tyranny of the village usurer, and to give the weary and emaciated people a chance to recuperate. Before the calamity private charity stands helpless and in despair. England must bestow—we said £5,000,000, Sir Wm. Wedderburn, Mr. Naoroji, and others said £5,000,000 long ago; but it must now be at least twice that amount if real abiding good is to be done. Well do we know that the one sure remedy must go deeper for touching the springs of Indian domestic policy and habits of Government. But the first requisite is a nation's charity, long, and whole-hearted, and timely, such charity as would imply an intelligent interest in the people of India on the part of English men and women, a genuine desire to lift them out of their despair. Nothing of this kind is to be hoped for at present, but the private giving of those who can spare, however small it may be in amount, helps somewhat, puts heart into here a village, there a family, and we gratefully welcome it until better days dawn.

The *Westminster Gazette* said (September 10): Famine and cholera in India have rather dropped out of public notice of late, but the state of things as regards both is still sufficiently serious. Late official reports show that while the general prospects continue to be on the whole favourable, there are still nearly five millions of people in receipt of relief. As regards the cholera there were for the week ending August 25 no fewer than 3,024 cases in the famine-stricken districts of Bombay, of which 2,337 were fatal, while in the Native States of the Bombay Presidency there were 4,431 cases, with 2,985 deaths. These figures will trip glibly off the tongue, but who can realise adequately their terrible significance? The only consolation is that they show a slight improvement on some that have gone before—and even for small mercies in this respect everyone is thankful. But what a volume of misery still remains!

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE ON THE FAMINE.

In the course of an article in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* (September 8) entitled "After the Famine in India," Sir Richard Temple writes:—

In the recovery of the country, on the supposition that this monsoon proves favourable, the only special drawback is the extraordinary loss of cattle. Such loss always occurs in every famine to an extent more or less vast, but in this famine it appears to have attained proportions exceptionally enormous. If the monsoon shall be propitious, if the epidemics which have hung as it were on the flank and rear of the famine relief operations shall pass away—if in consequence the countless local industries shall revive—there are still the sequelæ, as they are called, of the famine to be anticipated. In some parts of the distressed area much may depend upon the rains of October, and on the autumn rains generally, for they must fall if the crops are to flourish. But the time and manner of their falling may greatly affect the health of the inhabitants. They might fall, indeed they have often fallen, in such a manner as to produce a very low, depressing fever. Although the famine relief operations may have sustained the strength of the people tolerably well, yet their health cannot but have suffered somewhat from all that has befallen during the drought; consequently they have a somewhat lowered physique wherewith to face any depressing ailments which may supervene in the autumn. At the best of times the autumnal fever is the bane of life in India. In the autumn succeeding a famine it is likely to be worse than usual. Circumstances differ infinitely in the immense area affected by this famine, and some parts may be better preserved from the ill consequences of famine than others. But on the whole the prevalence of wasting sickness in many parts is to be anticipated among the after-effects of famine.

It is after the extreme crisis of famine is over and past that the benefit of the sums generally subscribed in England and elsewhere for the benefit of the sufferers comes into play. Though the State expenditure has been unstinted and immense, nevertheless the Government is steward for the people's money, and cannot go beyond the strict necessities of the grave and distressful emergency. This unavoidably leaves a broad margin for private benevolence. Gifts, allowances, small subsidies in a hundred forms can be dispensed in cases where the Government officials might not think themselves justified in affording full assistance. Above all, assistance can be given to families broken down by the famine, and to orphan children of those who have perished, not perhaps from hunger, but from diseases incidental to the great calamity.

Lastly, the public sympathy is generally drawn towards great calamities. The mighty sorrow, the mortal agonies, the incalculable losses, the heart-breaking anxieties, appeal to the imagination. Men wonder how India can possibly survive such misfortunes. But she will. She has done so often before when the misfortunes have been as great or greater, and when the surrounding circumstances have been far less favourable. She has recovered from some famines when there was misgovernment in all civil relations, when war was raging, and when revolutions were rampant. From some famines she has recovered amidst what may be called general anarchy. From some famines she has recovered when the State had not the means of affording relief, and when the methods of doing so were not understood. In these times, however, she recovers from famine under favourable circumstances, when the means of communication are perfect, when grain is conveyed from the superabundance of the prosperous districts almost to the doors of the drought-stricken regions, when civil government has reached a high standard of efficiency, when the whole resources of the most highly organised government in the world are applied to the

mitigation of distress, and when the administration of famine relief has been reduced to a science. Famines, like other great national emergencies, are to be accepted as the judgments of Providence. However great the affliction caused thereby there will be compensations. Though the expenditure of State funds will be enormous, yet the country is held together. The population is saved in the main. The resources of the state are not materially impaired. The moral effect upon the popular mind is abiding. The Natives see their foreign and alien Government put forth efforts to save their lives—efforts which no indigenous Government throughout all the ages in India had ever dreamt of, efforts not actually paralleled as yet among any, even of the Western nations. Among the European officers set over them they have seen zeal and humanity equalled only by that practical capacity in which Anglo-Indian administration has never failed.

LEAVES FROM A MISSIONARY'S DIARY.

The Rev. B. Joachim, engaged in missionary work in the province of Rajputana, has sent home a journal describing the scenes he witnessed while bent upon succouring the famine-stricken natives. The following are extracts from his journal:—

"On Thursday, March 1, I arrived at Ajmere, and on Friday I visited the bazaar, where I saw two famished people busy picking up anything they could find. When the banians (grain merchants) sweep away the grain from the front of their stalls, the poor wretches try to find a grain here and there, which they collect into a small tin-box. Here I saw a child eating dry cow-dung. Here I also noticed the corpse of a woman. . . .

"Saturday, March 3.—At 10 a.m. I left for Neemuch (in Gwalior). On my way thither I met at all the small stations hundreds of walking skeletons, who moved heaven and earth to receive even the smallest help. If they were offered a pice—a farthing—or a piece of bread, they fought each other with all the strength left them; the strongest among them carried away the booty. For a pice they would have taken the risk of being run over by the train. Not a drop of water could be got anywhere we passed; attached to the train was a tank of water, which was distributed at some of the stations. . . .

"Tuesday, March 6.—Shandla. . . . In the afternoon I rambled through the town and country round; here and there I saw human corpses, some deprived of a leg, others of an arm or foot; these limbs had been carried away by beasts of prey, jackals, or hyænas. I picked up two children out of the dirt; one of them was unconscious, and a dog had torn a piece out of its arm—the poor thing was still bleeding. I carried it home in my arms. It was covered all over with smallpox. . . . At ten o'clock I went to the bazaar; a few yards from the house I saw a woman lying under a tree; she had just given birth to a child. I baptised the baby. In the bazaar I found seven children, whom I placed on an ox cart and sent home. Everywhere in the bazaar were lying starving people who looked like skeletons; their bowels were sunk against their back, and their chest stood forward like two wings, sharp enough to cut bread with. . . .

"Friday, March 16.—At Lamia famine relief works have been organised. Hundreds of people are engaged under the superintendence of a European engineer in preparing the land for a new railway. My first business was to go to the engineer, and to ask him whether any of his workpeople had died leaving orphans. He answered that I had just come a week too late; that a father from Ajmere had been there and had taken them all."

"EXPENDITURE IN NATIVE STATES."

Under this heading the *Advocate of India* (Bombay) of August 20 publishes the following correspondence:—

To the Editor of the "Advocate of India."

Sir,—I had addressed the accompanying letter to the *Times of India* in connexion with the article that appeared in that paper on the subject of the question put by Sir William Wedderburn about the expenditure of Native States in this Presidency. As it has refused to publish it, I shall esteem it a favour if you will kindly insert it in your paper. Having itself discussed a question of public importance in its editorial columns, whether your contemporary was justified in refusing to publish important facts connected with that question I leave it to your readers to judge on a perusal of my letter.—Yours, etc., Chimanlal H. Setalvad.

To the Editor of the "Times of India."

Sir,—You seem to have taken considerable pains to find out what you call the "mystic purpose of Sir William Wedderburn in enquiring of the Secretary of State for India whether the Native States in this Presidency, and particularly the State of Bhavnuger, had reduced all unnecessary expenditure in India and in England." To those who know what Bhavnuger has done for Sir Mancherji Bhavnugri there is no mystery at all about what was in the mind of Sir William in putting the question in the form he did. There is no room for either insinuation or innuendo in the matter, for the plain facts are that since 1894 Sir Mancherji, though in England, has been by the Darbar's Huzur orders Nos. 18 and 21 getting every year from the Bhavnuger Treasury a total of Rs. 27,600, as shown below, besides travelling allowances:—

Rs.	
9,000	For Sir Mancherji's expenses in England at the rate of £50 a month (this item being put down as "political expenditure"), besides travelling allowances.
3,000	Rent for bungalow in Bombay at Rs. 250 a month.
12,000	Pension at the rate of Rs. 1,000 a month.
3,600	Life pension at the rate of Rs. 300 a month.
27,600	

Before 1894 Sir Mancherji was drawing very liberal emoluments for the various posts in which he was supposed to serve in Bhavnuger, but liberal as those emoluments were they were not so large as the provision of Rs. 27,600 a year which was secured to him when he made up his mind to stay altogether in England. Even British India, a country the most liberal in the whole world in the matter of salaries and pensions, never pays any of its officers, after a hard and sustained service of thirty-five years, so much as £2,000 a year. Nobody can deny that the services of Sir Mancherji to the Bhavnuger State have been very valuable and onerous indeed. In one of the several trips that he made to England on behalf of the State he proclaimed to the British public the liberality of his patron, the late Thakore Saheb of Bhavnuger, by a gift of a lakh of rupees to the Northbrook Club, which was followed by the bestowal of the insignia of G.C.S.I. on the Thakore. On another occasion Mr. Bhavnugri represented the Bhavnuger State at the Colonial Exhibition, and it was as such representative that the C.I.E. was conferred upon him. And it was during these trips that Mr. Bhavnugri qualified himself for the Bar, the Darbar paying all his expenses in that behalf. The Lord Chancellor of England, although he may have held office only for a single day, is, I believe, entitled to a pension of £5,000, and the Secretaries of State draw £2,000 a year as pension. And you may be disposed to compare the services of Sir Mancherji to Bhavnuger to those of the Lord Chancellor or a Secretary of State, and consider that in providing him with nearly £2,000 a year, and having the satisfaction of being represented, though informally, in Parliament, the Bhavnuger State is fulfilling its legitimate "obligations to retired servants." But others may fairly ask whether it is not indirectly "subsidising political agitation," although of a kind approved of by the official classes and their organs, and whether it is not an item of "unnecessary expenditure" for a "purpose of doubtful utility."

To enable you to judge of the character of the political expenditure of £50 a month allowed to Sir Mancherji during his stay in England, you will allow me to remind you that it is a strict principle of the Indian Foreign Office to set its face sternly against any representation of a Native State in England in any shape or form whatever. You are no doubt aware that this policy is not relaxed even in the case of the Amír of Afghanistan, even at the cost of putting up with the discontent of a potentate, whom, in every other respect, the British Government are anxious to keep attached to themselves.—Yours, etc., Chimanlal H. Setalvad.

THE DEBATE ON THE "INDIAN BUDGET."

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS IN INDIA.

The "Times of India."

Official and non-official members alike strangely failed to realise anything more than a transient economic phenomenon in the famine. The grant that was asked for on one side and refused on the other was invariably spoken of as a measure of relief for the present necessities of the famine-stricken districts. Those who urged it clearly had no other purpose in view than the provision of more camps, more hospitals, more kitchens and poor-houses, and a more generous and widely-diffused system of doles, and more generous advances to cultivators who need to be started again on their farms. All these purposes are eminently beneficent, but if those who have tacitly formulated them have thought that they were thereby projecting a solution of the real problem that the famine has brough

with it—and will leave behind it—they were sadly and dangerously mistaken. Some of them did look beyond the famine, it is true. Lord George Hamilton, possessed with the visionary side of things as usual, spoke of a good time coming, when the clouds would pass away and we should be able to make considerable remissions of taxation, "and so to ameliorate and improve the general condition of the taxpayers." This was a mere form of words, which, we venture to say with all respect to the Secretary of State, he will never be able to translate into facts. The clouds which have settled over Western India at all events will not pass by unless the rulers of the land realise more seriously than the Secretary of State has done the permanent elements that make for poverty. He trusts, apparently, to the spontaneous recuperation of the famine-stricken region—to a recuperation which without effort or policy will bring back prosperity to a starving and a broken peasantry. Not a word had he to say of any help that the State is to give to this restorative process, beyond the grants now being made for re-establishing the cultivators on their holdings. With the Secretary of State and—to be fair—with the House of Commons at large, the history of this famine ends with the setting in of the present monsoon in Gujerat. The cultivators are once more on their fields; the rains are falling in rich abundance; the famine is over, and—the desert shall blossom as the rose! It has never occurred to Lord George Hamilton that the effects of this famine will be felt in Gujerat for a generation, and that the relief of it will be woefully incomplete unless the land revenue assessments are resolutely taken in hand and brought down to the paying capacity of a half-ruined population. It is just here that an Imperial grant could be made with large permanent advantage to the people and to the State. The necessities of the situation in Gujerat and in parts of the Deccan cannot be met without reductions in the assessment so large as to embarrass the finances of India, and this grant would have put the Government of India in a position to impose upon the Local Government a policy of reductions in which due regard should be had to the deterioration that has come over such a large part of the agricultural population of the Presidency. If the demand for a grant could have been associated in the House of Commons with such a policy as this, a much better case might have been made out for it. And, what is especially important, the British public would thereby have been reminded that there is a grave and continuing poverty in India, which affects the lives of her people long after famine letters and famine statistics have harrowed their feelings.—(August 18.)

The "Friend of India."

Several members discussed the general financial position of India, and particularly the Report of the Welby Commission. With commendable frankness Sir Henry Fowler expressed his profound disappointment with that Report. As he pointed out, the arguments of the Commissioners are often admirable, but, instead of pressing these arguments home, the Commissioners content themselves with recommendations which are so timid as to be positively ridiculous. After five years' incubation a series of recommendations is reached of such microscopic dimensions that it is almost doubtful whether more harm than good has not been done by this enquiry. The net result appears to be that the British Government will contribute £250,000 a year towards the Home Charges of the Indian Government; but as these charges have increased in the present year alone by just over a million sterling, this small subsidy leaves the real evils practically untouched. What is wanted is a fundamental readjustment of the charges for military services. Recent events have proved beyond the possibility of dispute that the Indian army exists, not merely for the local defence of India, but also for the general defence of the Empire. It is, therefore, unjust that it should be paid for by India alone. Only the other day the Premier of New Zealand published a scheme for raising in Australasia troops that should be available for Imperial needs in any part of the Empire. He proposed that the cost of maintaining these troops should be divided equally between the Mother Country and the colonies. This scheme might be reasonable enough if the colonies already made any fair contribution to the defence of the Empire. They do not. Practically the whole burden of defending the British Empire is borne by the taxpayers of the United Kingdom and by the taxpayers of India. We contend that, as between India and England, an undue share of the burden now rests upon India. Let that be first readjusted. Afterwards let England make the best terms she can with the colonies. She will find them somewhat more difficult to bargain with than the respectable young man who now reigns at the India Office.—(August 16.)

The "Madras Mail."

The Government has much need of caution in its acceptance of proposals for fresh expenditure. It is bound to be just to the army, the navy, the reserve forces, and the Empire at large before it can go out of its way to be generous to India. And it is undoubtedly of much importance that India should be educated to walk alone, and trained to the habit of financial independence. But one can be righteous over much: and on the present occasion her Majesty's Government should have taken a broader view of the moral duty of England than it has cared to do. The calamity in India, resulting from long continued failure of rain, is the greatest on record. It is affecting more than twice the area, and nearly twice the population affected by the famine of 1876-77; it has rendered six millions of people, or twice as many as in 1896-97, dependent on the State for food; and incidentally it has entailed a loss estimated at over £20,000,000 sterling in the value of the wheat, cotton and oil seeds crops. The Government of India has succeeded so far in meeting in the last two years alone a famine expenditure of £13,000,000 sterling; and it is not disposed to admit that it cannot continue to pay its way. But the country has been greatly impoverished by the diversion of funds that would have been far better employed in promoting its material prosperity, and it would have been a gracious thing if England had come forward with a free gift of £5,000,000 to reduce the loss. The acceptance of so considerable a gift should surely not tend either to the pauperisation of India or the demoralisation of her Government, as is evidently apprehended by her Majesty's ministers. At any rate, as the acceptance by the Government of India of eleemosynary aid afforded by Relief Funds is not deprecated on high moral grounds, there seems an excess of prudery in refusing a grant of public money for fear of it doing injury to India's self-respect. The present calamity is not so bad that it might not be worse. But it is bad enough, since it is without parallel, to justify an unparalleled demonstration by England of practical sympathy.—(August 16.)

The "Pioneer."

The *Times* tirade against the Government for adherence to orthodox financial principles, unless it has been grievously misrepresented in compression, is a first-rate example of the prevailing spirit of the moment. The princes and people of India, it says, did not act on strict financial principles when they exhibited their sympathy with England in the war. This is the sort of argument one might perhaps have expected to find in Sir William Wedderburn's paper, but it is fairly astonishing to see it admitted to the columns of the *Times*. What have private donors and sympathisers got to do with strict financial principles in considering how they shall dispose of their own: what have Chancellors of the Exchequer, the guardians of the public money, got to do with sentiment? Obviously, the only thing that her Majesty's Government have any right to consider is the financial situation of the Government of India. It is not their affair to repay private loyalty with interest, nor could they easily do it if they wanted to; but the Government of India has to be kept on its legs, and as far as that goes Mr. Balfour has assured the country that if the Government of India needs assistance it shall have it. This presumably means that, if owing to the famine the Indian Government should find itself in a position in which extra taxation had become obligatory, the Home Exchequer would step in with a grant that would fill up the deficit and avoid the necessity of raising more money. In that case financial help from England would be a sensible relief to India—or rather to those classes in India who would otherwise have to bear the burden of the new imposts, and these, be it observed, would not be the famine-stricken from whom it is *à priori* impossible to take anything extra. But short of the case just supposed, what sensible alleviation would a million or two dropped into the public chest produce in the country?—(August 10.)

The "Indian Spectator."

Whatever Sir Henry Fowler might think of it, Lord George Hamilton's speech, on presenting the Indian Budget to the House of Commons, must come as a grievous disappointment on the Indian public. A certain pathos there certainly was in it, but the man who can speak of India in its present condition without importing some amount of pathos in his description must indeed be possessed of a genius for literary opacity. What we should have expected of the Secretary of State is some indication of the policy to be adopted, to prevent, or at least to mitigate, the effects of such calamities in future. Instead of it, however, we are presented with a disconnected and superficial review of the events of the year. The Secretary of State enlarged, with evident relish, on the commonplaces of Indian finance and of Indian administration, and carefully avoided every subject that might have led him beneath the surface of things. The House of Commons must be more ignorant of India than we can believe if much of what Lord George Hamilton said was new to it. The debate centred on the making of an Imperial grant to India. The Secretary of State announced that he intended to raise a loan of three millions sterling, and if that amount was found insufficient he would unhesitatingly appeal to the Imperial Treasury. "Will that be a free grant?" interposed Mr. Maclean. To which the Secretary of State replied that his honourable friend must not ask him to anticipate what may be done by the Government. We know what it means, all the same. It seems that the main reason for Lord George Hamilton's opposing any grant from the Imperial Exchequer is that Indian finance must be made self-supporting and independent. This is, no doubt, also the reason for levying heavy and unfair burdens on this country, so that its finance may be inured to extraordinary pressure on it. "It is not because I have no sympathy with the people of India," pleaded his lordship, "but because we must make Indian finance self-supporting." Ever since the country passed under the Crown this pretext has been availed of to set aside the claims of the Indian people, and Indian finance is not yet self-supporting. Now would it not be prudent to try the other policy as an alternative?—(August 19.)

The "Champion."

England takes 22,000 of India's soldiers, and pays for them—we grant this is unusual—and we are to consider it a saving. Or, in other words, we train servants, pay for them, but some other person uses them for a while, and because, while they are not in our service, the man who uses them pays their wages, we are therefore to consider this a satisfactory and economical arrangement. Is this not too absurd for words? It shows how badly off for excuses British statesmen are when, as is often the case, they are cornered in an Indian discussion. We can quite imagine how Sir Michael, who is a skilled debater and a very clever man, would have torn to shreds such an "argument" had it been advanced against any of his proposals. And we shall not treat our readers as children; that is, we shall not bemean them and us by bothering to answer such absolute rubbish. Other speakers, of course, took part in the debate. Sir William Wedderburn, who, as is his custom, spoke sturdily for this country he loves so well, and Mr. Maclean, as is also his custom,

gave every one in the India Office fits. We should like to publish Mr. Maclean's speech in full, but even though Lord George Hamilton declares the Sedition Laws are the same here as in England, we know better, and we leave the task of reproducing Mr. Maclean's speech to others who may be so inclined.—(August 19.)

THE "LAHORE TRIBUNE."

If Parliament faithfully discharged its duties and responsibilities towards the unrepresented and voiceless people of this country, they would have no just grounds for complaint and every hope that justice could be done to them. It was only to be expected that Lord Salisbury should express his concurrence with the remarks of the Liberal leader in the House of Lords. The Premier, of course, entirely agreed with Lord Kimberley in repudiating the idea that India had any reason to complain of the treatment she had received at the hands of the Imperial Government. Lord Salisbury, however, thought it was very desirable that the treatment of India should be generous and liberal, because, as one reason, the mass of the Indian people were much more struggling and suffering than the mass of the English people. The dumb and helpless people of India are not so sanguine as to expect generous and liberal treatment at the hands of her Majesty's Government, Liberal or Conservative. They merely ask for bare justice in the apportionment of charges between the Indian and Home Governments in regard to matters in which both are interested. They gratefully accept the announcement made by the Under-Secretary of State for India as a first instalment of justice, and most earnestly trust that the hope held out by him that the Imperial Government desires to treat India equitably would be fulfilled in due course.—(August 18.)

THE "BENGALEE."

With what little wisdom is the world governed, is a very old saying; and its soundness is illustrated by the conduct of the Ministers in connexion with this question. A grant from the Imperial Exchequer would not make any difference in the financial position of England, while it would cement the bonds of good-will and sympathy between the two countries. Are moral forces of no moment in the government of men and communities? Are they not even of greater commercial value than gold and silver? But the maddening effect of power deludes the rulers of men, and the continued enjoyment of power has relaxed the moral fibre and has clouded the judgment of the present Government. We cannot understand their opposition to the Parliamentary grant to India except it be that a Parliamentary grant will necessarily involve Parliamentary scrutiny into Indian affairs which the Government is resolved by all means in its power to prevent. We trust the Parliamentary grant will yet be made, and British public opinion will assert itself, despite the opposition of an omnipotent Government.—(August 17.)

THE "AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA."

If the British Government refused to help this country under difficulties the people of India have this consolation, that their case was fairly put before Parliament. And this, not by Bhownaggree, the only Indian in Parliament, nor by any recognised friend of India like Sir W. Wedderburn or Mr. Herbert Roberts, or even any Liberal, but by one who is or was a Conservative, and who had bitterly opposed Mr. Bradlaugh when that illustrious Englishman tried to secure some sort of self-government for India. This Englishman, Mr. Maclean, was in India, and carried home with him the prejudices which stick to almost every Englishman who stays here for some time. But he is naturally honest and outspoken. If he is convinced of a wrong he will expose it without mincing matters. He was convinced that "India under our rule is bleeding to death," and he told the plain truth to Parliament which governs the Empire. He supported the contentions of the Indians in their entirety. Only he expressed himself in a plain, blunt manner which no Indian would have dared imitate. Thus his starting point is that "we are bleeding India to death." His remedy is something more than a free gift of six millions. He says: "A free gift would not suffice; it should be accompanied by a comprehensive policy." And what is that policy? It is to follow the plan suggested by Colonel Phayre Smith; that is to say, to give India a permanent settlement of land. He repeated the story, which we have often told in our columns, how a permanent settlement of land in India was determined upon, and why the idea was given up at the last moment at the opposition of Manchester. The objection of Manchester was, according to Mr. Maclean, based upon the idea that "if land revenue were reduced, heavy indirect taxation would be the result," which means taxation upon English imported goods.—(August 23.)

THE "HINDU."

While Lord Salisbury would argue that India should bear the common burdens of empire along with England, Lord George Hamilton tells us Indian finance ought, as far as possible, to be made self-supporting and independent, and it being the duty of the Finance Minister to establish an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure, that official will have no inducement to put money aside for famine purposes if he knows that when a famine occurs the British Treasury will at once come to his aid. But how can there be financial independence when India has to meet every sort of burden thrown upon her without her consent and for purposes in which she has no interest? In what way is India a gainer if Britain wage a war in Central Africa or elsewhere and conquer more territories? Ours is a duty without a right, to bear burdens without the right to reap any advantages. It is ridiculous to tell us that we should bear the common Imperial burdens without demur when in the British Colonies in South Africa Indians are treated in a most oppressive manner, and when, even after all the loyalty shown by our countrymen in South Africa, there is such strong opposition among Englishmen to giving equal rights to Indians in the South African colonies. If Britain acquires fresh territory, it is her sons that directly benefit themselves; they get a monopoly of the high appointments and a market for British merchandise. But what is the lot of Indians in newly acquired territories? Are they allowed to share with Englishmen all the advantages which every fresh acquisition brings with it? So far as South Africa is concerned it is not even recognised that Indians ought to be treated like intelligent human beings. We do not, of course, say that we should not be subjected to any portion of the burdens of the Empire; but what we complain of is that there is absolutely no responsibility recognised in any quarter to treat India fairly. All sorts of burdens are thrown upon us whether our revenues can bear them or not; and our wishes and interests are of no account. There must be an end to this sort of thing if grave financial collapse is not to overtake India and bring about disaster.—(August 13.)

THE "ADVOCATE OF INDIA."

It was, however, reserved for the redoubtable Mr. Maclean to lift the veil of Ministerial hypocrisy and expose its nakedness. The Chancellor forgot the relative financial and economic conditions of the two countries. Moreover, "it was plain," said Mr. Maclean, "that Lord Curzon had received a hint from her Majesty's Government that such an appeal was not desired." This was the trick. No care was bestowed upon the immense material losses the famine had already inflicted on the rayats, though the Secretary of State himself was the very first to point them out in hard arithmetic. But, of course, he was inconsistent. The loss of crores of rupees in crops and otherwise was appalling. The condition would take time to repair. And yet, while this was the distressful situation, he would not advise his colleagues in the Cabinet to grant the prayer of Mr. Souttar. But apart from this question of the grant, what practical proposals for the amelioration of the famine-stricken rayat were made by Lord George Hamilton? What scheme did he formulate to alleviate his material condition in the future? What had he to say to the remissions of land revenue in Gujerat and the Deccan? What about the future land assessment policy of the Government? What about prevention of famines? On all these topics there was not a word. "The produce of the land," said Mr. Maclean, "had fallen by nearly fifty per cent. since the days of the Mogul Empire, and this in spite of all that had been done by railways and irrigation." Further, he said, "one of the great problems before Indian statesmen was so to alter the land revenue and the charges upon the cultivators as to give fair play to the Indian agriculturist." But of this nothing was said. Lord Hamilton's statesmanship, whatever it be, was entirely silent on this most crucial and burning problem of the day. So far, then, the budget debate has again proved barren. There was not in Lord George Hamilton's speech even one negative virtue to which we can refer with anything like satisfaction. As usual it ended in nothing but words, idle words, words irresponsible and unstatesmanlike, to be forgotten no sooner they were uttered.—(August 13.)

THE "MADRAS STANDARD."

England is directly responsible for the government of this country. The Secretary of State for India controls, shapes, and directs the destinies of the three hundred millions in this land. The administration is almost exclusively in the hands of highly-paid European officers, and in short, as Lord Curzon said, England can afford to lose her colonies without her national prestige being in the smallest degree damaged, but she cannot exist in her present position without India. In other words, the destinies of India are bound up with those of England, and India has as much right as the people of England or Scotland or Wales to expect help from England when she cannot make ends meet. Lord George Hamilton laid down the self-complacent proposition that if you want to encourage effective economy in India, if you want to ensure financial reform, you must make Indian finance as far as possible "independent and self-supporting." He was not pleased to explain why it is so. We have only his *ex cathedra* statement to go upon. But curiously enough we heard nothing of this when Indian troops were taken to Egypt and India was charged with the cost. We were then told that Imperial considerations were superior to all arguments about justice in the apportionment of charges; and of late Imperialism has become the supreme argument. If so, why is it that the same Imperial considerations are not taken into account when the proposal to make an Imperial grant to India is made? Neither in connexion with the cost of the Suakin contingent nor in relation to the cotton duties legislation did we hear such arguments. Then it was all the interests of the Empire. Even legislation by mandate was thought an Imperial as well as a moral necessity. Nothing was then said of independence and things of that kind. It is when India wants a grant that all these arguments are trotted out. We must say we are disappointed. We expected, every friend of India expected, that Parliament would after all make a grant. We can no longer live in hope. It has been extinguished. What we are astonished at is that the very patriotic statesmen who put the Imperial idea before everything else should have refused to make a grant to India although the British public were in favour of it.—(August 15.)

On Monday next, September 17, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will give an address in the hall of the London Patriotic Club and Institute. The subject of the address will be the economic relations between the United Kingdom and India, and their effects upon the two countries. The chair will be taken at 8.30 p.m. by Mr. J. Poole, President of the Club.

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